

THE BLOOMFIELD GAZETTE, DECEMBER 28, 1872.

The Bloomfield Gazette.

Office, -- At the Post Office.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1872.

CHRISTMAS.

CHRISTMAS, however old, is always new and welcome. We picture the old year, as working his tedious way along, with feeble frame and snowy locks; but his companion is young and cheerful, crowned with garlands and decked with robes of green. So gay and sportive is he that men, with common consent, have named him "Merry Christmas." He is welcomed in the palace of the rich and the lonely dwelling of the poor; prayers and songs hail his advent; every one is celebrated with festive honors; and he departs amid the rejoicing voices of the votaries.

It is right that it should be so; for of all days this is the greatest. Other holidays are limited in their sphere, being at most, only of national significance, while Christmas is of world-wide interest. Christian nations regard it as the birthday of the founder of their religion, and believe the time is coming when it will be celebrated in all lands, by all peoples. In the fourth century, the 25th of December was agreed upon by the churches of the East and West as the day of Christ's nativity; and it has so been observed ever since.

Christmas has long been celebrated in story, verse and song. For ages there has been a strictly Christian literature, some of the richest poetry in our language being in commemoration of our Savior's birth. One of Milton's sweetest hymns is that on "The Morning of Christ's Nativity," beginning:

It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born child
All mealy wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature, in awe to him,
Had doffed her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize.

We do not know of any better way to begin Christmas than to read that hymn in connection with the Gospel history. The ancient Latin hymnology of the Church abounds with hymns on the Nativity, the pleasure of reading which would repay one for the labor of learning the language.

There is a comparatively modern species of literature no less attractive to the multitude, consisting of Christmas stories. Everybody has read Dickens'; and at this season his name will be recalled in thousands of homes that have been made pure and happier by his ready pen and loving heart. The demand for this class of reading is so decided that our newspapers and journals publish stories expressly for the season. In the hands of good and wise men, this literature can do more good than thousands of sermons and didactic essays; for it will be read and remembered by many whom sermons never reach.

And what shall we say of song? The silence of the day we commemorate was broken by celestial strains:

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellation set,
And the wondrous world on hinges hung.

The burden of the song was, "Peace on earth, good will to men;" and the voices of myriads since have continued the glorious strain. Some of the sublimest music composed by the masters is that prepared for the celebration of Christmas; and many of our churches, at this season, pay special attention to this part of public worship.

The modest carol must not be overlooked; though not pretentious, it is a great favorite in families and Sunday Schools. During the middle ages these carols were sung by bishops and the lower clergy, joined by the populace; and the songs were enlivened by dances and the music of tambours, guitars, violins, and organs. Many collections have been made of these medieval carols; some of which, modernized, are now sung in our schools and families.

It is a cause for rejoicing that the observance of this day is growing in favor with us. There have been—there still are—churches where greens and flowers are never seen; where the observance of Christmas is thought a relic of the dark ages. But these notions are becoming dispelled by the irresistibly sweet influences of the season; and men are learning to recognize the gentle spirit of Christianity wherever it is found, and to believe that no denomination has an exclusive right to any excellence. Let us all accept the injunction, "Peace on earth, good will to man." All hates must be buried; all wrongs forgiven; all friendships cherished: for He whose natal day we celebrate, above all other things, taught forgiveness, and set us the example.

The method of celebrating Christmas in the early Church, was to spend the first part of the day in public worship; the rest was devoted to festivities. These latter too often degenerated into rude excess; but the principle is the right one. After having returned to their gods for God's best gift to man, it is proper and profitable to join our families and friends in social intercourse. Among our New England brethren it is customary to do that on Thanksgiving day; and men will leave important business, and travel hundreds of miles, to be at the old home on that occasion. This is good; we would not have it otherwise. But is not Christmas still more suitable? If one must give way, let it not be Christmas. The Sunday schools have decided the matter, as far as they are concerned. It is considered a bad sign of a school's vitality, if it allows

the day to pass without its Christmas Tree, Santa Claus, or an equivalent.

Fashions change in this, as in other matters. The Yule-log no longer burns in Merry England; and the children's stockings are seldom hung up by the fire-place in this country; but the holly is popular as ever, and Christmas trees are every year in greater demand. We confess to a liking for the stocking; some of our happiest experience is connected with it. But if our youngsters like the tree better, they shall have it; their children will want a change, and the good old fashion will return.

One of the most prominent of the festivities accompanying Christmas is the custom of giving gifts. There are few who do not join in this pleasant observance, where parents and children, brothers and sisters, and friends and neighbors, vie with each other in kindly, and very often costly, remembrances. Weeks and even months before, nimble fingers are engaged in making all kinds of handiwork; and money is hoarded up to make purchases for friends. This with many persons is carried further than their means will justify; others limit the tokens of affection to their own families, or intimate friends. Still there are many whose hearts are open to the wants and sufferings of the poor; and who seek them out to comfort and relieve. Let us on this joyous occasion obey the precept of Him who said, "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed: for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be resurrected at the resurrection of the just!"

THINKING ALOUD.

HONOR TO WHOM HONOR IS DUE.

OTHER TOWNS have their men of mark—or those whose distinguishing characteristics have given them creditable and extended notoriety; why may not Bloomfield? To be sure she has not been accustomed to blow her own trumpet, or to court applause from abroad. Nestling here among the hills, indeed, she has been so well satisfied with her position, so unmoved by the tumult and vociferation of the world beyond, so self-complacent in her onward, centennial progress, she scarcely knows if she has any special merits or suspects it possible that any of her citizens can have a special claim to distinction! The consequences of that a public man, or an aspiring man, is half buried here; not, indeed, for lack of appreciation, but for want of cordial, encouraging, enthusiastic support.

It is an old and authentic saying that "a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country and in his own house." But if one has no opportunity to manifest himself beyond his own home sphere, must he then live and die without credit and without laurels? We admit the adage has too many verifications to doubt its validity, but we desire to protest against its justification. Opening talent, and the best promises of capacity are sometimes blighted in the embryo by lack of countenance and encouragement at home. So also those who are well calculated to be useful in church, or state, in society, or profession, frequently dishearten and fail in their efforts to develop a latent talent for want of the proper incentive which kindred and friends could wisely give but mistakenly withhold.

The foundation of true greatness is intelligence and goodness of heart. Few communities, we are fain to believe, are more generally pervaded with these elements than Bloomfield. Why should we ignore these valuable qualities because, perchance, the worthy possessor is our kinsman or neighbor? Why should we not recognize goodness and scholarship, merit and talents, self-denying labors and consecration to his calling, in the pastors and physicians of our town as readily as we do in strangers and non-residents?

We have often thought it a very mistaken modesty or reserve in a son or a brother to withhold merited praise and refuse to set forth the capabilities and virtues of his kinsman because of the relationship. It is beautiful, and commands the admiration of every right-minded person, to behold appropriate deference, respect, affection, confidence, and suitable commendations accorded by members of a domestic circle or of a family to their honored head and to each other. In fact the highest testimony we can have of an individual character, and the strongest support and encouragement he himself can receive, are derived from the known and expressed sentiments of his own family first, and next of his own neighbors.

We have been led into these preliminary reflections while penning for our readers a few sketchy observations in another column under the caption "Home Celebrities." We purpose continuing them from time to time until the material is exhausted in Bloomfield and Montclair, and that will not be very soon, we think.

CALDWELL.

In our last issue we mentioned the destruction of the Presbyterian Church by fire two weeks previous. We have now to announce the erection of a temporary chapel capable of accommodating about 450 people. It is comfortably seated, carpeted and warmed, and was opened with divine service last Sunday. The promptness and taste with which this necessary convenience has been supplied speaks well for the intelligence and consistent enterprise of Caldwell people.

NAMES OF STREETS.

MESSENGER: I propose to trespass on your limited space, in reviewing an article in your issue of Dec. 14, under the caption of "Names of Streets," but before doing so would say to the writer that his "Paranulations" have attracted considerable attention, and will undoubtedly result in accomplishing what he much desires, and which is a small neglect, but not of those he charges it upon.

If I mistake not the meaning of the writer, is that the Town Committee are responsible, and therefore, remiss in their duties.

In finding fault, it is well to remember the receipt given for cooking a hare, and here let me say I am not, never have been, and never expect to be a member of that much abused body, the Township Committee, but we will see what are the duties of the Town Committee. All the powers they can legally exercise are well defined by law. In Nixon's Digest, page 970, section 12, we find: "Which Committee shall have authority, and it is hereby rendered their duty to examine, inspect, and report to the annual or other town meetings the accounts and vouchers of the township officers, and to superintend the expenditure of any money raised by tax, for the use of the township, or which may arise from the balance of the accounts of any of the township officers." There are other sections which refer to special duties, in regard to taxes, Roads, Line Fences, &c. By recent special laws their powers have been increased only as regards sidewalks, and neither in the general nor special laws is there a single line or word which gives them power to expend a cent for the purpose of marking the names of streets.

We are to be congratulated on the efficient and judicious committees which, as a township, it has been our good fortune to secure to manage our affairs for a number of years past. At our annual town (spring) elections, it is voted how much, and for what purpose, we will raise money, and even then the purposes are regulated by our laws. The suggestion of signs necessitate the expenditure of money, and as there is no provision for it the committee have no power. The remedy is to call town meetings, discuss what is needed in way of town improvement, prepare the law, and our accommodating Legislature will pass it for us.

There is another point I will, with your permission, touch upon, your "paranulations" spirit is in the improvement of this town, but it is evident to me he is not advised of the facts in the case. The streets, for the most part, are named, many of them by the Township Committee. The "lane" he speaks of "by the Methodist church," is Park Street, "and some other unknown or unnamed street parallel with and west of Broad Avenue, (street) is known and named as State street." At Broad Street, at the commencement of this lane stands a street lamp on a substantial cast-iron post, the first street lamp erected in Bloomfield, if I mistake not; and at the junction of this "lane" and the "unknown or unnamed street," is placed another lamp, whose light is remarkable for its brilliancy and for the regularity of its being lighted, for which the care-taker of it deserves credit. And here comes a little joke; this lamp has been up about 4 years and a ground glass upon the "lane" side can be seen these symbols—PARK STREET, and on the opposite side, STATE STREET; so that night or day, who he passes may know upon what street he is. In the immediate neighborhood lives the Town Clerk, whom I would here thank for his kindness for information furnished in this article. If there is to be a change, I would suggest "Dodd Street," it was intended, and steps were taken to push it through to Bloomfield Avenue, the measure was obstructed by an ingenious device, professedly, I believe, for the public good. The fine avenue next referred to is Park Avenue, formerly Bloomfield Avenue, but upon the Railroad's taking the turnpike, and changing the name to Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield Avenue was changed to Park Avenue. The sidewalk referred to in this street, was the first laid in Bloomfield under her sidewalk laws. There are many other points which space and time forbid my touching upon. Only one more, "But what of the nameless street lying midway between Beach and Liberty streets?" says Paranulator. It was named while I was a boy, and the name of it is Division street. If your correspondent can't find a map to enlighten him in his Paranulations, let him call on

AN OLD BOY ABOUT TOWN.

MORRIS NEIGHBORHOOD.—We understand that the improvement referred to in the article suggestive of "Morris Park" is in the laying of a street from the Morris Neighborhood to Stone House Plains, beginning near and opposite the residence of Hon. Samuel Potter, and running a mile N. E. to a point opposite the Canal Bridge, near Major Kierstead, and which, when extended, will make a direct road to the store of the late John T. Garbrant, deceased, and all the way over solid land, and the saving of a great distance in the direct travel.

The road was laid over one year ago by six surveyors of the highways, who, in their united judgment, awarded certain benefits to pay certain damages. Most of these awards for benefits have been paid. Some one or two have not, and this is delaying the opening of the road.

Objections are made that the award which the surveyor made was not a fair one. It would seem difficult to settle such matters, if they cannot be left to the judgment of six judicious men.

THE METHODIST, one of the best of the religious weeklies, is an independent, liberal, enterprising high-toned journal, published in New York. In politics, without being partisan, it ably contends for the vital interests of our Republic. On the Public School question it has never swerved, honestly claiming the fostering care of the State governments, and tacitly, at least, of the General Government, for their continuance and enlargement, and their untrammeled freedom from sectarian interference or bias. On all religious and moral questions, it is fearless and independent,

REV. S. L. Baldwin, late of Bloomfield, has been heard from at Yokohama, twenty-five days from San Francisco, on his way to Foo Chow, China. We hope to hear what were his observations in that to us, new mission field. Very little would be likely to escape his notice which would be of interest to the Church.

EUCLIDIAN LECTURES.—The lecture of Miss Anna Dickinson, last week, was an unusual treat. Her subject, Joan d'Arc, afforded her

gentle, yet judiciously conservative in the best sense. Its literary merits are high. Its large and constantly increasing circulation (now 25,000) confirms our own disinterested judgment. We have read it from the start, and our family would not like to do without it.

The large engraving of the Methodist Bishop which is promised to every new subscriber for 1873 should attract a subscription from every Methodist family, at least.

WHAT A HALCYON WORLD this would be if everybody should observe the golden rule of Christ—"Whosoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them"—tantamount to which is the apostolic rule—"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." We can begin to understand why the big heart of the al-loving and beneficent God should set this grand and beautiful principle forth so early, so clearly, so emphatically and so personally. He, who knew what was in man, saw that this would be the sure panacea for the ills of humanity which grow out of selfishness, envy and jealousy; and these, once exterminated, there would be nothing left to oppose the influence and dominion of love in the human heart.

These thoughts have so frequent application that everybody can readily make it, without reminding them of the beautiful exhibition of the golden rule, which we should have all over the town, if, after each snow fall, the sidewalks were immediately cleared.

After last week's storm, we found the walks cleared quite promptly and splendidly on Washington Avenue, from Bloomfield Centre to Hildebrand Avenue. On "Central Avenue," north of Bloomfield Centre, the only walks we found cleared were in front of good Mr. Newton Baldwin, good Mr. Howell, good Mr. Cook, good Mrs. Swift, the good Methodist Church, and the good Miss Dodd's. After the next snow we shall try to make a more extended survey and report in the succeeding issue of the GAZETTE.

THE GAZETTE will be published weekly till further notice.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, "OLD BOY ABOUT TOWN," has misconstrued our article on Names of Streets, and fails to get the drift and spirit of our remarks. No more at

FOR NEW UMBRELLAS, or for repairs to old ones, our readers who go to New York can satisfactorily accommodate at Gilmore's, in Greenwich street, near Barclay.

JOSEPH MORRISON'S CROCKERY STORE, on corner of Greenwich and Barclay street, is a good place to supply wants in that line. Those who would like to buy in Newark can supply their needs equally well at B. Morton's, 645 Broad street.

FOR LAMPS of all kinds, there is no better place than Henry Russell's, 38 Park Place, N. Y. We have tried it and recommend it. See his advertisement.

A FINE OPPORTUNITY to learn the German language is furnished by one of the best native scholars and instructors—Prof. Muller. He has classes in Bloomfield and would be happy to form a class in Montclair. See his advertisement.

MONTCLAIR LOCAL.

POST OFFICE in this village has been enlarged and painted up to make a very creditable appearance, and afford ample conveniences, for its increasing business. It has 306 boxes for special accommodation. It only lacks one to be even with some other offices we wot of, and that is an interesting young lady attendant to deliver the mails.

ON SUNDAY NIGHT, last, the residence of Jacob C. Brautigan was entered through the parlor window, and a piano-cover, overcoat, etc., missed next morning. The Citizen's Protective Association is on the alert to arrest the thieves. We do not choose to tell what suspicions exist as to the audacious villains who perpetrated the deed.

ON SUNDAY EVENING, the 15th, Dr. Hawes, of Phillipsburg, addressed the young members of the Congregational Literary from Phillipsburg, 3d chap. and 8th verse, urging, with eloquence andunction, the teachings of the text, to work with all our might, to use to the utmost all the talents given us by our Great Master. That we should, like St. Paul, always give up at the first intimation sight that comes between us and our Heavenly Father. The young man, when starting in life, should not first set before himself as his goal, money, fame, or other allures of this world, but should make it his first aim to live by God's Word.

BLOOMFIELD LOCAL.

IT HAS BEEN WELL SAID that the standing of a place is truly indicated by the character of its local press. If the newspapers of a place have the appearance of thrift, the column being well filled with the announcement of its business establishments, it is safe to conclude that the inhabitants thereof are wide-awake, public spirited and progressive.

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the best possible opportunity for the display of her peculiar talents.

She probably has seldom addressed more intelligent and appreciative hearers. For nearly an hour and a half she held the large audience to do without it.

THOROUGHLY AT HOME and informed on her heroines with a truthfulness and power that vibrated in every breast present, exciting an equal admiration for the youthful martyroheroine and the whole-world lecturer who so eloquently would defend and immortalize her.

She is, doubtless, the foremost woman lecturer in this country. If she would devote herself to the cause of temperance, she would prove of the greatest blessing to her race—generations yet unborn would repeat her name with gratitude and affection.

We earnestly commend this suggestion to her warm and sympathetic heart, to her large and comprehensive mind, to her eloquent and convincing tongue. This is a mission, useful and glorious, and worthy of all her due talents.

A MARRIAGE.—The pleasant home of Abel Baker, Esq., on Linden Ave., Bloomfield, was well fitted with wedding guests, Wednesday, 13th inst., at the marriage of Miss Fannie M. Baker to Mr. S. Landen Hubbel of Fair Haven, Conn.

In some particulars, this wedding was novel. There were happy faces, the usual hearty congratulations, the customary "feast" of good things, the average amount of pleasant music and smiles; but above all, and many thought, best of all, it was quiet, home-like, enjoyable. Perhaps, some would add, solemn. If so, the fact that the newly wedded were to leave for their new and distant home in Michigan on the same day, will be all the explanation necessary.

ONE INTERESTING EPISODE deserves record. Miss Baker for some years has taught the Infant Class in the Sabbath School of the Methodist Church, in which work she has been unusually successful, and by which she endeared to the hearts of the little ones to her. To show their affection, a Bible was bought. On the cover were the words—"Our Dear Teacher," and within an appropriate inscription. During the afternoon a deputation of the little folks entered the parlor, formed a semi-circle about their teacher, taken altogether by surprise, and Miss Lydia Heden, a little five-year-old, in a touching, beautiful speech, which brought tears to the eyes of all, presented the sacred volume on behalf of the class of which she is a member. The effect and lessons of such a scene are too potent to need comment.

LET US WISH THEM, as did the children, "health, happiness, and prosperity in their far-off home."

OUR REPLY.